



US006357824B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Whitacre

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 6,357,824 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Mar. 19, 2002**

(54) **BEACH/FIELD RECLINER**

(76) Inventor: **Bruce E. Whitacre**, BEW Enterprises,
7006 Trappers Ct., Manassas, VA (US)
20111-4378

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

5,269,157 A	12/1993	Ciminelli et al.
5,295,556 A	3/1994	Mullin
D355,743 S	2/1995	Hammack et al.
5,577,746 A	11/1996	Britton
5,620,191 A	4/1997	Sayette
D400,475 S	11/1998	Parker
5,873,582 A	2/1999	Kauffman, Jr. et al.
5,897,131 A	4/1999	Brown et al.
6,039,333 A *	3/2000	Hamblin 280/47.18
6,139,029 A *	10/2000	Shaw 280/8

(21) Appl. No.: **09/617,031**

(22) Filed: **Jul. 14, 2000**

(51) **Int. Cl.**⁷ **A47C 13/00**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **297/118; 280/648**

(58) **Field of Search** 297/118, 129,
297/452.14, 16.1; 280/30, 7.12, 8, 7.1,
648

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

GB	2 113 622 A	8/1983
WO	WO 96/26858	9/1996

* cited by examiner

Primary Examiner—Jerry Redman

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Richard C. Litman

(57) **ABSTRACT**

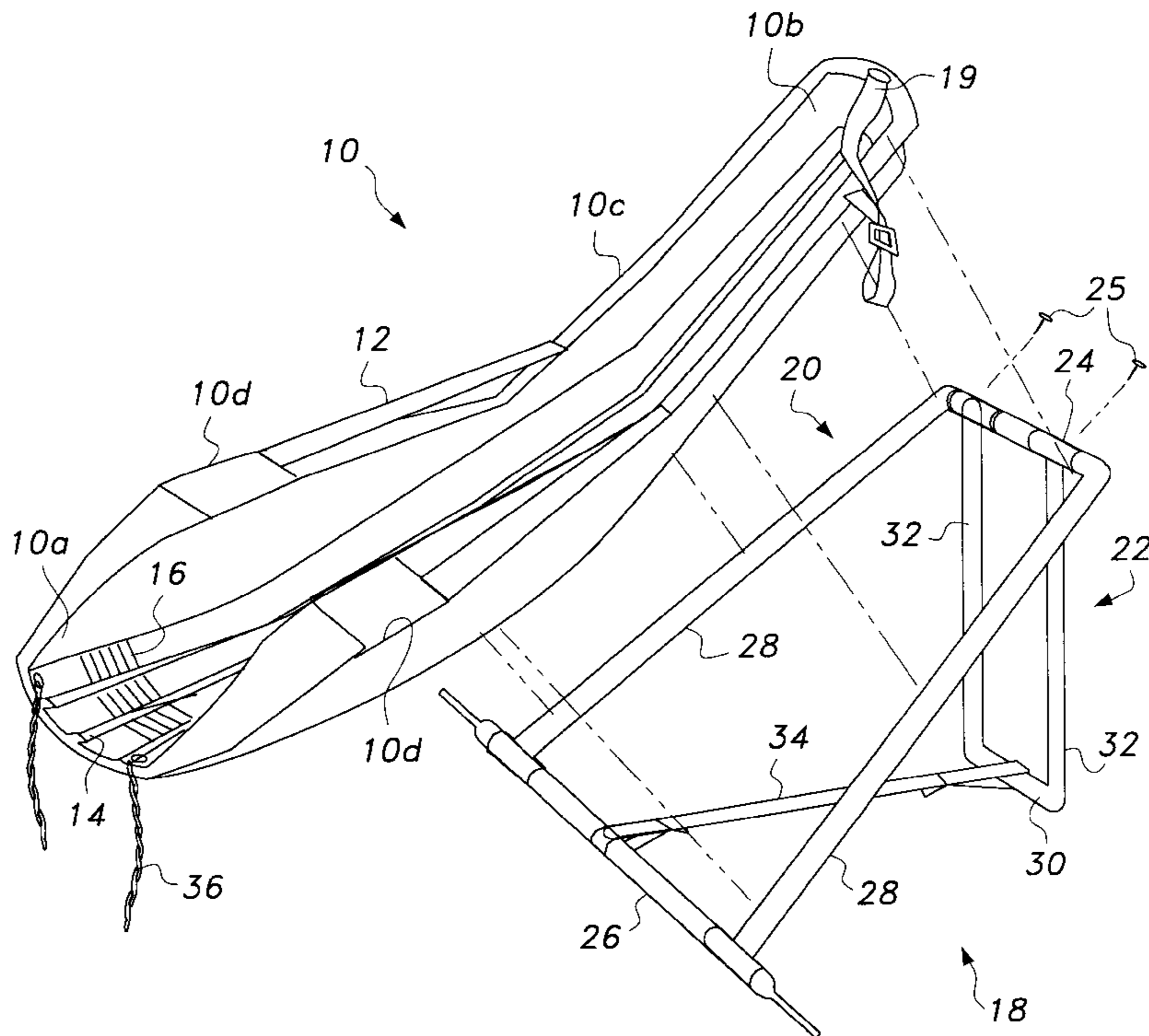
A convertible beach/field apparatus comprises a one-piece seat/sled component fabricated of plastic or fiberglass. The component has a spoon-shaped front end and an inclined rear end. A frame is provided to support the component. The frame includes two quadrilateral members which share and are rotatable about a common side. The quadrilateral members may assume a first position whereby the apparatus can be used as an inclined seat. A second position of the quadrilateral members and the addition of wheels will allow the apparatus to be utilized as a cart. The component alone may function as a sled.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2,546,493 A *	3/1951	Booth	280/648
3,580,592 A	5/1971	Schrecengost	
3,659,865 A	5/1972	Nothacker	
3,822,069 A	7/1974	Hoff	
3,930,662 A *	1/1976	Manner	280/648
4,533,151 A	8/1985	Maitland	
4,694,979 A	9/1987	Ables	
4,934,719 A *	6/1990	duPont	280/47.131
5,039,130 A	8/1991	Sheiman et al.	
5,056,804 A	10/1991	Wilson et al.	
5,265,892 A	11/1993	Said	

9 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets



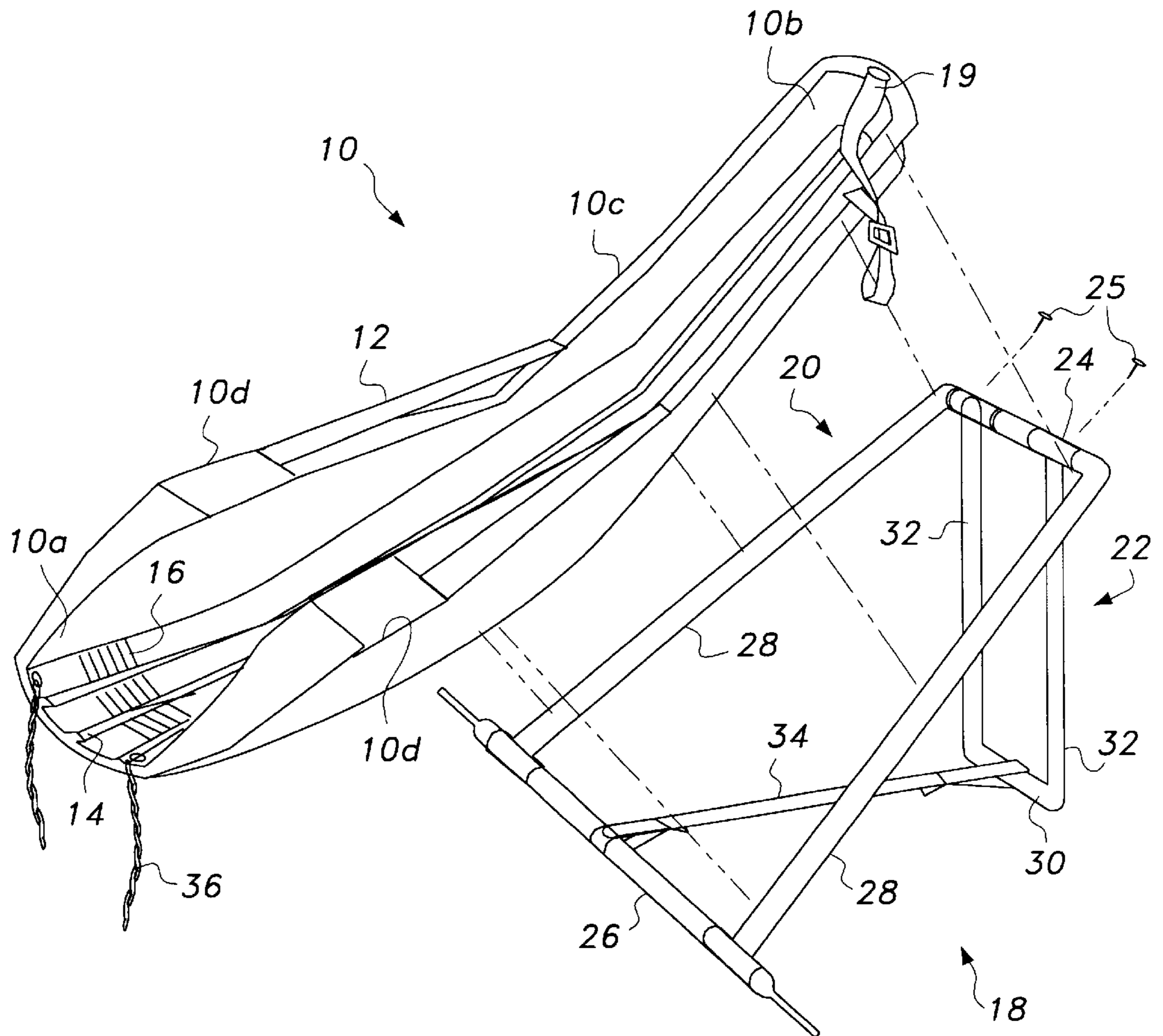


FIG. 1

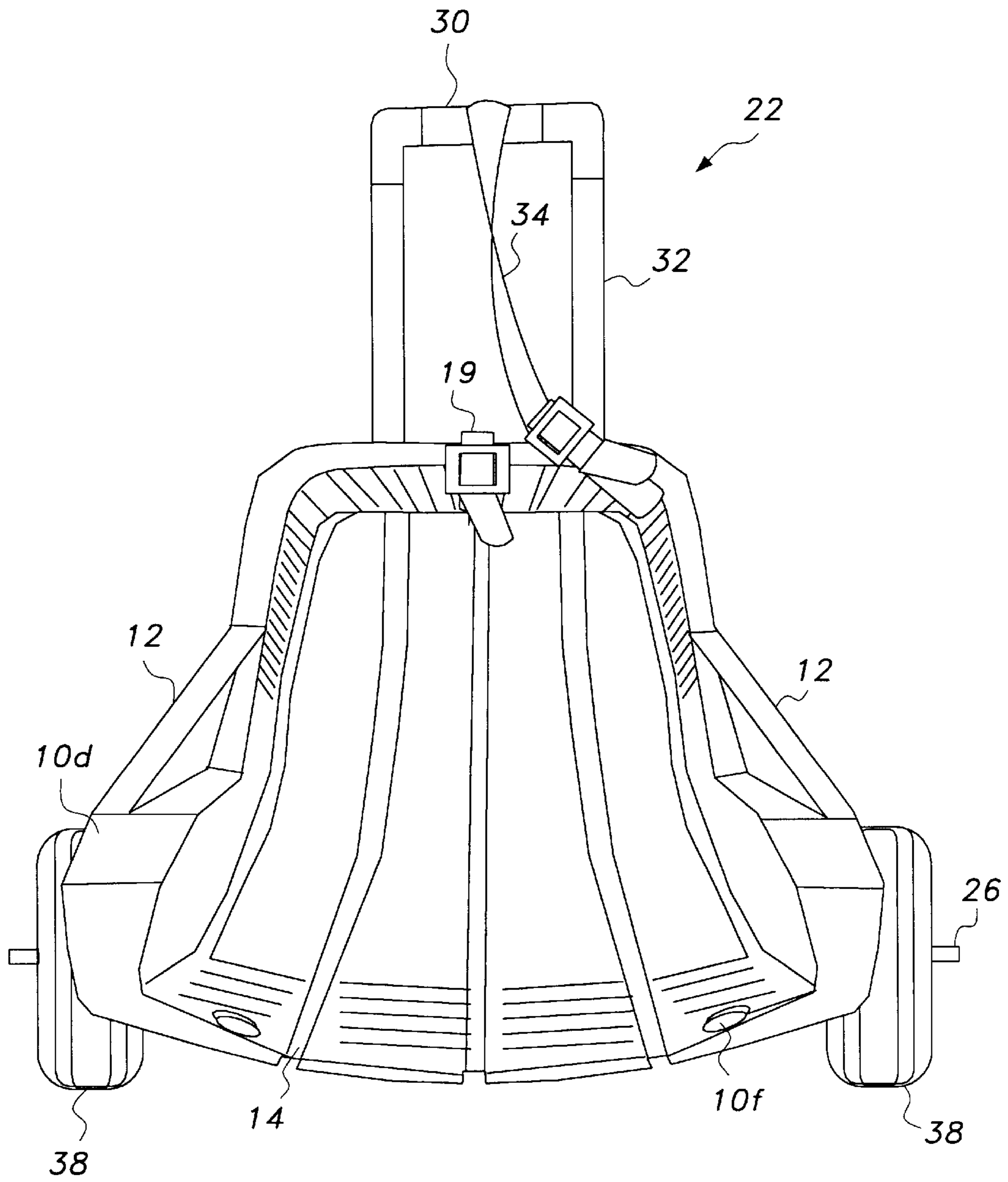


FIG. 2

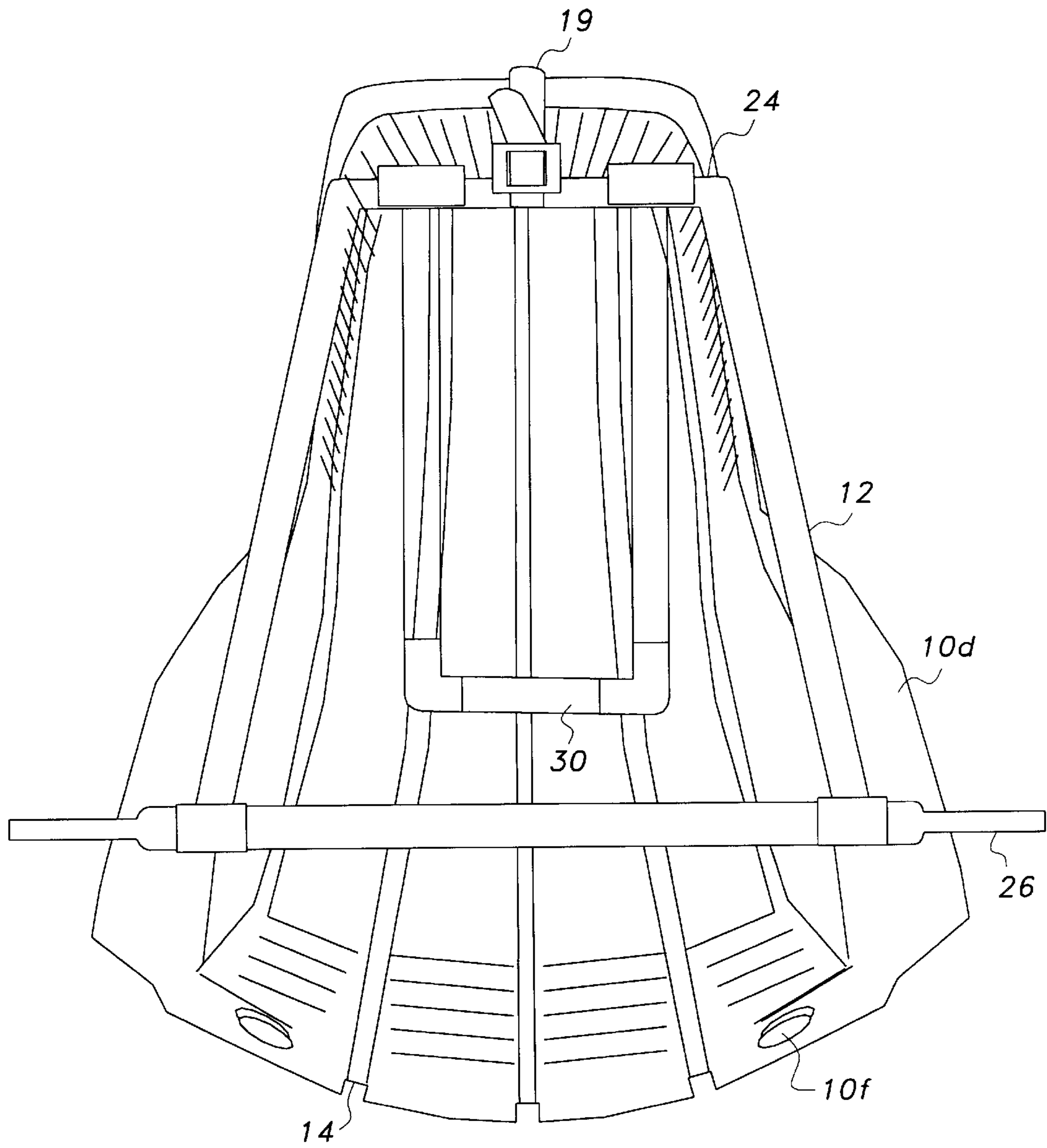


FIG. 3

BEACH/FIELD RECLINER**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention generally relates to land vehicles. More specifically, the present invention is drawn to an apparatus which may be converted to a sled, cart, or chair.

2. Description of the Related Art

The hunter, camper or beach-goer is always in need of rugged, adaptable, uncomplicated conveyance apparatus to transport equipment in and out of the field or to and from the beach. It is a boon if the conveyance apparatus can provide multiple functions.

Examples of multi-purpose conveyance apparatus for hunters and/or campers are disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 3,580,592 (Schrecengost), U.S. Pat. No. 4,694,979 (Ables), U.S. Pat. No. 5,295,556 (Mullin) and U.S. Pat. No. 5,873,582 (Kauffman, Jr. et al.). All of the above show apparatus which is relatively complicated to assemble and convert as compared with the apparatus of the instant invention.

U.S. Pat. No. Des. 355,743 (Hammack et al.), U.S. Pat. No. Des. 3,822,069 (Hoff), U.S. Pat. No. Des. 4,533,151 (Maitland), U.S. Pat. No. Des. 5,056,804 (Wilson et al.), U.S. Pat. No. Des. 5,265,892 (Said) and U.S. Pat. No. Des. 5,269,157 (Ciminelli et al.) all disclose apparatus which is convertible for multiple purposes. However, none of the disclosed apparatus is rugged enough to be utilized for transporting equipment in and out of the severe environment traversed by hunters and/or campers.

U.S. Pat. No. Des. 400,475 (Parker), U.S. Pat. No. Des. 5,039,130 (Sheiman et al.), U.S. Pat. No. Des. 5,620,191 (Sayette), U.S. Pat. No. Des. 5,897,131 (Brown et al.) and W.I.P.O. Patent number WO 96/26858 show sledding apparatus. None of the above inventions exhibit the versatility as disclosed in the instant invention.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,577,746 (Britton) and United Kingdom Patent number 2 113 622 A show folding, transporting vehicles which have no other functions.

U.S. Pat. No. 3,659,865 (Nothacker) shows a one-piece safety seat for a child, which seat can be provided with wheels or sled runners if desired.

None of the above inventions and patents, taken either singularly or in combination, is seen to disclose a beach/field recliner as will be subsequently described and claimed in the instant invention.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is drawn to an apparatus adapted for use in a hunting, camping or beach environment. The apparatus is versatile in that it may be quickly and easily converted from a reclining backrest chair to a cart or sled. When in the form of a cart or sled, the apparatus can be used to haul game carcasses and/or equipment in and out of the field or to carry gear (coolers, umbrellas, etc.) to and from the beach.

Simplistic in design, the apparatus comprises two main elements, an adjustable frame member and a rigid seat/sled component. The adjustable frame member functions as a backrest support when the apparatus is used as a chair and as a carriage and pull handle when the apparatus is used as a cart. Two wheels may be attached to the frame member when the apparatus is to be utilized in its cart form. A strap is provided to support the frame in the chair position and to function as a harness to facilitate pulling when the apparatus

is in its cart form. When not in use, the frame can be folded flat and placed in the seat/sled component for easy transport.

Accordingly, it is a principal object of the invention to provide a multi-purpose apparatus capable of functioning as a reclining chair, cart or sled.

It is another object of the invention to provide a multi-purpose apparatus which is durable and rugged.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a multi-purpose apparatus which is easy to use.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a multipurpose apparatus which comprises a minimum number of parts.

It is an object of the invention to provide improved elements and arrangements thereof for the purposes described which are inexpensive, dependable and fully effective in accomplishing their intended purposes.

These and other objects of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is an exploded, perspective view of a beach/field recliner according to the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a front view of a beach/field recliner in its cart form according to the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a front view of a beach/field recliner in its sled form according to the present invention.

Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Attention is first directed to FIG. 1. A sled/seat component is sized to support the upper body of an average adult and is approximately four feet long and two feet wide. The lower half or bow **10a** of the component fans into a spoon shape so as to present a comfortable position for the sitter when the apparatus is used as a chair. The upper half **10b** of the component is slightly inclined to act as a backrest. One-piece component **10** is fabricated from a lightweight, rugged material such as plastic or fiberglass. Members **12** are positioned on each side to create handholds for lifting or to provide means for tying equipment to the component. Lengthwise channels **14** are disposed in member **10**. Channels **14** function to provide rigidity, move fluids and debris away from the occupant and act as runners when member **10** is used as a sled. Ridges **16** are positioned on the lower half **10a** to provide a frictional force to prevent an occupant, when sitting, from sliding out of the component. An overhanging rim **10c** disposed along the perimeter of the component is designed to add strength and to also engage a supporting frame generally indicated at **18**. Fenders **10d** are provided as protection from rotating wheels as will be further explained below.

Frame **18** consists of two quadrilateral members **20** and **22** of different sizes and which share a common side **24**. The larger quadrilateral member **20** has a side **26** parallel to common side **24**. Legs **28** form the other sides of member **20**. Smaller quadrilateral member **22** comprises a side **30** which is parallel with common side **24**, and parallel legs **32**. Member **22** can be rotated three-hundred sixty degrees around side **24**. As shown in FIG. 1, frame **18** is positioned in the reclining chair mode wherein component **10** is adapted to be supported on frame **18**. An adjustable strap **34**,

3

attached to side **30**, is removably fastened to side **26** to support frame **18** and component **10** at the desired degree of inclination. A strap **19** is attached to the top of the sled and to side **24** to prevent the sled from sliding down from the frame.

To adapt the device to function as a cart a user would simply remove strap **34** from side **26** and rotate member **22** to the position shown in FIG. **2**. A pair of wheels **38** is provided for rotatable attachment to side **26**. In this configuration side **30** becomes a handle for pulling the cart and side **26** now functions as an axle. A pair of pins **25** (FIG. **1**) may be provided to lock the handle in place if necessary. Strap **34** may be utilized as a shoulder harness for pulling the cart by merely adjusting the loop.

In the sled mode frame **18** is simply folded flat and rotated to a stowed position (FIG. **3**) so that component **10** can be dragged along the terrain. Ropes **36** (FIG. **1**) may be inserted in openings **10f** to facilitate pulling component **10**.

It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.

I claim:

1. A convertible apparatus comprising:

a unitary component, said component having a front end,
a rear end, a bottom, two sides and a perimeter;
a spoon-shaped portion defined at said front end;
an inclined portion defined at said rear end;
plural channels in said bottom, said channels disposed in
a direction from said rear end to said front end;

4

an array of ridges in said bottom, said ridges positioned adjacent said front end;

a frame; and

a member connected to the frame which rotates between a first position to support the apparatus as a chair recliner and a second position to allow the member to be used as a handle thereby converting the apparatus into a sled.

2. The convertible apparatus as recited in claim **1**, including fenders formed on each side of said component.

3. The convertible apparatus as recited in claim **1**, including a pair of openings formed adjacent said front end.

4. The convertible apparatus as recited in claim **1**, including a first strap, said first strap attached to the rear end of said component.

5. The convertible apparatus as recited in claim **4**, wherein said first strap is attached to said common side.

6. The convertible apparatus as recited in claim **5**, including a second strap, said second strap attached to said frame.

7. The convertible apparatus as recited in claim **6**, wherein said second strap is adjustable.

8. The convertible apparatus as recited in claim **7** wherein the frame further comprises a pair of wheels, said pair of wheels being rotatably disposed on opposite sides of the frame to form a cart.

9. The convertible apparatus as recited in claim **7**, including means for locking the apparatus in the first position.

* * * * *